

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

I believe that if the broadcast flag is added, content providers will use their leverage to force electronics companies to prohibit making personal copies of DTV content. Clear evidence from this comes from the music market, where the record labels are releasing CDs that customers can't copy in order to create their own mixes of music, and can't copy to portable MP3 players.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices?

Again, the problem is not with the broadcast flag per se, but if the broadcast flag is created, it will inevitably be used in ways that will prohibit sending content across a network. As a computer scientist, I know it is very difficult to create technology that would allow users to share content in a home network without also allowing them to share it across the internet--especially in the case of open-source operating systems like Linux. Therefore, in order to prohibit internet sharing of digital content, content providers will instead choose to limit the rights of consumers to share information among their personal devices.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

If the FCC requires such a flag, it also should require that content labeled with the broadcast flag can still be used by existing equipment. Absent this requirement, I believe it is very likely that new devices that comply with the broadcast flag requirement will be incompatible with older equipment.

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?

It may not be technically feasible to enforce the broadcast flag requirement in all kinds of future equipment.

Computer systems that allow users to install new components that are programmed to do custom tasks, such as open-source operating systems like Linux, cannot enforce a requirement like the broadcast flag--simply because anyone can change the system to get around it. These kinds of open systems are growing in popularity because of their flexibility, security, and cost-effectiveness, and it would be a terrible mistake to outlaw them because they cannot enforce the broadcast flag.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?

I don't understand the electronics technology or how the broadcast flag requirement would be implemented well enough

to answer this question.

Other Comments:

I would urge the FCC to not impose a broadcast flag requirement. However, if the FCC does mandate broadcast flags, it should **also** require that any device that is compliant with the broadcast flags provide some way to support personal and fair-use copying of digital content.